RUNE TROOPERS

ルーントルーパーズ

自衛隊漂流戦記

浜松春日

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Rune Troopers - Volume 01 Chapter 00-01 (Incomplete)

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Illustrations

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Prologue: Yorimashi

Yorimashi [1][edit]

In the decaying temple there was the crashing sound of the entrance door being torn open.

In the circular open space at the deepest part of the temple, it was heard.

Wounded, the expression of the exhausted knights and their resignation was evident----there was no way to turn things around any longer. They had just prolonged things for a bit.

The imperial capitol had fallen into enemy hands, and the gathered soldiers had barricade themselves in this temple at the base of the mountain. On the 6th day the front gate gave way.

Soon the enemy would rush into here too.

The Holy Purominia empire had boasted of 500 years of prosperity, now its tragic end was waiting.

The God Emperor no longer sat on his throne and the Elite Sacred Imperial Guard were nearly all in the Mamono's bellies. If they left this cave they could see red lit night over the burning imperial capitol.

"Is it a matter of time before we lose here?....."

"It might not if you put the plan into action."

The open space was faintly lit with a lamp's light magic and an old man and a young woman, who bore expressions of quiet despair and frenzy, were talking.

They were people who had escaped into the temple before the knights. The high-ranking Shinto priest of the Moon God, and head wizard of the magic school, who was a person who could manipulate first-class magic. They were already prepared for death.

However they wouldn't fall easily. They didn't have that type of bravery.

The man in an expressionless voice spoke to the altar in the center of the plaza.

"Is it good? Hyumuna."

The hoarse voice had power in it.

"Yes....."

On the altar the Yorimashi was sitting calmly.

The Yorimashi was a girl just starting puberty.

Her body was wrapped in a white, thin robe of feathers that subtly showed the lines of her body was holding her hands together as she prayed deeply.

She had the white wings that proved her descent from the winged people, and looked so beautiful she could easily be mistaken for an artificial doll.

What they were trying to do here was heresy.

But, for those about to fall, it was hope.

The battlefield, the feast of slaughter, approached step by step.

In black robes, the magicians who hid their faces in the hood, stood at equal intervals surrounding the altar at the center.

All them were reciting the same quiet word.

Echoing in the cave, their chant gathered together and intermingled.

『Drifting light from the Void's Interstice.』

The Yomashi's body was etched with fresh blood.

『Connect this world and the Nether world, sentry don't block us.』

The girl had a tortured expression.

『Have the winged people's blood as compensation I pray.』

Her overflowing blood is inhaled by the magic formation underneath her.

『Show this world compensation from a different sky!』

Simultaneous with the completion of the poem the enemy poured into the plaza.

A one-sided battle broke out in the plaza.

No, it would better be described as a slaughter.

The knights had lost their willpower, and the people wearing robes had no weapons. They fell one after another as the enemy army invaded. It couldn't be called resistance.

However at that time feelings other than despair were on the faces of those who fell and stayed down. None of the enemy soldiers noticed it.

The corpse had a crooked smile hidden deep in his hood as it's vacant eyes stared at the hollow where the altar disappeared from.

Translator's Notes and References[edit]

1. ↑ Yorimashi is a term for someone who can be possessed by a god. Kanji normally is 'Possessed + Miko', this is 'Depend upon + Miko'. For more http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yorishiro

Chapter 1: Expeditionary Fleet Sails 8/21

Expeditionary Fleet Sails[edit]

On that day in Yokosuka City, Kanagawa Prefecture the cloudy weather looked like it might rain.

For a ship leaving port it was somewhat depressing weather.

Hiroyuki Kuze of the Ground Self-Defense Force, lined up in perfect order at the railing with a subordinate, and looked down at the Yokosuka Maritime Self-Defense Force base before their eyes.

Because the deck of the transport was almost the same height as a four story building they had a commanding view of the wharves.

Drizzle lightly hit his cheek.

From the wharf could be heard the shrill voice of a female reporter for a TV station.

"Yes! This is the Yokosuka Maritime Self-Defense Forces base! Right now the fleet is sailing. Although called international cooperation, the fleet is sailing to join a so-called UN Peacekeeping force!"

She was speaking in a purposely tense voice that was well understood by Kuze.

Probably in the evening news, with heavy BGM[1], it will portray the Self-Defence force as "Dispatching Troops" to foreign countries.

"Sailing at this time is a transport vessel, and supply ships, defended by a state-of-the-art Aegis class Destroyer of the Maritime Self-Defense Force for a total of 5 ships. The transport vessel is said to have state-of-the-art tanks and military helicopters, and it is an 'operational unit' unlike any force dispatched in the past."

The female reporter, wearing a raincoat, looking back at the fleet sailing away was captured on camera.

"The flagship 'Ibuki' is a state-of-the-art Aegis destroyer and was built as a

ballistic missle interception warship, and the Self-Defense Forces have fully armed it for its overseas deployment. In it's deployment in Africa there's the possibility of the rebel army using ballistic missles and 'Ibuki' has a duty by international law to shoot them down."

The reporter flipped open a flip diagram showing an explanation, via a rough sketch, of how ballistic missle interceptions worked.

And then discussed the differences of this deployment tensely.

"The dispatch of the Aegis destroyer 'Ibuki' is said to be part of a certain plan of the government and top echelon of the military. It-----"

The reporter turned over the flip and showed a photograph from last years public military parade, by The North, of it's mobile ballistic launch system.

"The North's nuclear armament is ready for combat and showed in the background."

The reporter lowered the flip display and looked at the stern of the Aegis Destroyer that was out in the open sea.

"The Aegis destroyer with its nuclear missile interception ability is sent as an emergency reponse to intercept any ballistic missles launched by the rebel army. As a result Japan can advertise to the world it has an effective defense against nuclear attacks. Behind the shadow of internation collaboration is the government's plan, which isn't unrelated to how tense the military picture of Far Eastern Asia has become....."

He couldn't hear the reporters voice anymore.

They too far from land now.

In Kuze's mind he had the feeling that they were now leaving Japan. And with that came an euphoric mixture of fear of the unknown and something mysterious.[2]

Kuze raised the visor of his camoflage work cap a bit and looked for a certain face in the crowd of families and concerned people who came to see them off at the wharf.

After a moment Kuze's, who will honestly turn twenty-four this year,

softhearted face became as cloudy as the weather.

Though young, an officer's insignia was shown at his collar, a cherry blossom and a bar. Three steps below a major, or in other armies a second lieutenant.[3]

The young officer was looking for the lover who had seperated from him several days ago.

Even though they had seperated he had expected her to come see him off.

However, coming to see an ex-boyfriend off sounds funny when said.

Afterall, his expectation didn't come true.

Having expected it was regretful.

Kuze was disappointed and looked up into the sky.

The light drizzle turned to large rain drops.

"Are you crying Platoon leader Kuze?"

Standing next to him the new young subordinate, who could only be described as looking very young, asked that. "Ichinose" was embroidered on the breast pocket of his camoflage uniform.

He was a bad brat of a private with a suggestive laugh, and even though Kuze was his superior officer they got along well for some reason. Possibly because of his boldness to say without hesitation which is the opposite of me, Kuze thought.

"I'm not crying."

Honestly it was a bluff.

"Liar, you are crying. It seems she's not here?"

"Stupid ex-girlfriend."

"All the more reason not to cry....."

After he let out a sign and smiled wryly, Kuze put on a serious look like a commander and looked at the people on the wharf.

It was like a hollywood movie with people hugging, kissing and saying "I pray you come back safely". I won't ask for that type of extravagance.

However, wanting the one you want to protect by your side, I don't think that's

too extravagent for a Self-Defence officer.

That there's no one to see you off, there shouldn't be a "Serviceman" who has that complaint.

As she said, when graduating from Defence Academy I didn't have to choose to path of being an officer of the Self-Defense Force, I could have become a businessman in an average company.

She was waiting to the end.

『Someone gentle like you isn't well suited to commanding in the Self-Defence forces.』

Indirectly she wished me to think of the future of two people.

I wasn't able to notice her wish.

Zama! The present me.....[4]

As the rain continued to pour down on the deck of the transport warship, Kuze was fed up with himself.

"……Is a stubborn man disliked by more than an ex-girlfriend?"

"You, you are cleaning toilets for three months starting today."

"A-abuse of power!"

"Ah! Ichinose, look!"

Kuze pointed at one girl in particular on the wharf. It was a girl with twin tails wearing a high school uniform.

"Hey, there. The younger sister came to anxiously see you off."

"Oh! Mina!? ...Good grief, even though I said it was safe."

The crowd gradually dwindled in size to the size of a grain of rice then disappeared over the horizon.

For the people standing in the rain seeing off the leaving fleet it was the same.

The reporter, when she saw the fleet departing into the fog she spoke.

"The fleet is scheduled to arrive in Africa in about a month. After it arrives it will begin live-ammunition exercise on land and at sea with the other

participating countries and retrain the rebel army. The Ground Self-Defence force will set up a base to the rear of the American Army and provide logistical support such as medical treatment and water transporation."

And thus the Self-Defence Force contribution to the UN dispatch fleet left it's home country.

What was waiting for it? A departure no one expected.

◇

Aegis.

The almighty God Zeus in greek myths supposedly gave it to the goddess Athena who excelled in strategy, the strongest shield.

Aegis destroyer.

The system called Aegis is a high performance radar and computer is an "Air Defense System" that tracks and targets more than 200 targets at the same time making it the strongest air defense warship in the world.

The Self-Defence Force, and the combat vessel assumed to symbolize the idea of exclusively-defensive defence of Japan the most.

The Maritime Self-Defence Force destroyer Ibuki's『First deployment meal』,lunch, started at the same time as the announcement. Displacing approximately 10,000 tons fully loaded, at 170 meters in length it is a large-scaled warship even compared internationally, and inevitably it has a large crew too.

So, at the current mealtime the general mess, which is the dining room for the general crew, is very crowded.

At one side is the ward room exclusively for officer's meals, which is wrapped in a solemn atmosphere. In a warship only it gives a calm impression.

"Commander present, attention!"

One of the officers raised his voice, the officers seated down the length of the long table straightened their posture together.

And, the man who had abruptly entered the wardroom took the seat at the head of the table.

The man wore the same black naval uniform as the officers.

At a glance he seemed young.

However, that's due to his atmosphere. He's actually middle-aged, but carried his body like he was about to go berserk.

His spine was straight and carried more ambition than the youngsters around him.[5] His body is a bit small but he possesses the dignity that isn't anxious about it. No, rather than dignity, it might be more correct to call it dependibility. But, his external appearance, if seen anywhere, would be a person who looks like a good man.

He is Rear Admiral Kaburagi Norio, the person in command of the UN Peacekeeping Force dispatch fleet.

"At ease."

"At ease!"

"So, it went well. Hurry up and finish eating? Everyone must finish eating. Oh, today's Friday, it's curry?" Only at the beginning was it serious, then Kaburagi stopped the officer who had shouted the order.

It wasn't very meaningful to continue the formal regulations for long periods he thought.

It seemed to him that if the officers had a smile, and didn't crack down, there were those who were disappointed.

"As usual Commander Kaburagi."

A refreshing voice sounded out in the wardroom.

Sitting facing opposite was the chief of staff of the fleet's command staff, Commander Shuuji Katou.

Amoung the officers seated there, he was an awfully conspicious person.

With the unframed oval glasses he wore, because they very often reflected the light (is it because of the angle?), he was famous for being recognizeable even on

a far away deck. With a baby face, which passed for a high school student, it isolated him from the sordid looks around him. If age was why senior staff became "Chief of Staff" it wasn't apparent at all.[6]

He was Commander Kaburagi's right arm. He was seated nearby at lunch for that purpose.

"I'm the commander so it's good."

The grinning face of Kaburagi was filled with energy like a boy.

He didn't mind the thoughts of those surrounding him as he lifted curry to his mouth.

After a while no one thought about Kaburagi as consideration turned to the lunch which was one of the few pleasures aboard a warship, and it had the scenery of a peaceful meal.

Only one person, Chief of Staff Commander Katou, gave a report.

"According to the report of the weather section, the typhoon which developed yesterday is swerving from it's route."

"Hoo, then is safe, anything else?"

"No, nothing. Ah, yesterday I saw a strange dream."

"A dream...?"

"Yes, I can't remember exactly but... a girl with wings growing on is his back, bleeding."

The officers sorrounding him turned with startled eyes.

"Ahaha. Sorry, is not talk for the midle of a meal is in it?

Nevertheless, Kaburagi don"t drop it.

"Misterious, rigth?"

"He?"

"I saw it too. The dream of a winged girl being sacrificed."

"Ee! Se... seriously?"

"Commander, it is not just exaustation?"

Intervened a medical officer, looked by an outsider a the superior officer is telling a strange story.

Translator's Notes and References[edit]

1. ↑ Background music I believe
2. ↑ not 100% sure on the mysterious part
3. ↑ Japan seems to count down from ranks, a colonel is 1 step down from a field officer(General) for example.
4. ↑ Another sentence I might be mangling: なんてザマだ、この僕は……
5. ↑ Last two sentences are likely phrases a bit different than the direct translation.
6. ↑ MANGLED!